



## Director testifies before Senate subcommittee

June 1, 2013



Lab Director Charlie McMillan and the directors of Sandia and Lawrence Livermore national laboratories recently spoke before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, Committee on Armed Services. The purpose of the hearing was to to receive testimony on NNSA management of its national security laboratories and to review the budget request for Fiscal Year 2014.

During his testimony, Director McMillan covered the challenges facing the Laboratory, including the need to continue to support the nation's nuclear weapons' mission in a time of declining budgets and aging infrastructure, and voiced concerns regarding the Lab's ability to attract and retain skilled staff.

"The time has come to challenge conventional wisdom. This applies to big box nuclear facilities. It applies to future life extension projects, and it applies to work that our designers undertake at the laboratories," urged McMillan. "Put simply, we must

implement a strategic risk assessment that balances value and cost. We must develop new approaches to sustain the stockpile in a more efficient manner.

“I am proud of the way that the Los Alamos team has challenged assumptions, and with our NNSA partners, we have presented a proposal for modular facilities that we believe deliver a win-win solution that provides plutonium capabilities without a big box nuclear facility,” McMillan added. “It provides a shorter acquisition period, smaller annual costs, and simpler standardized construction. It delivers capability when we need it rather than no capability until a full big box is completed.”

He also related that he believes that non-traditional approaches will be required to meet the challenges, fiscal and otherwise, that lay ahead.

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